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THE REALIZATION OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Human rights and extreme poverty

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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BURUNDI

[13 July 1991]
[Original: French]

Introduction

1. Despite the progress achieved by the international community in the enjoyment of human rights, extreme poverty continues to be rife in the third world, seriously affecting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals, families and groups. The United Nations General Assembly therefore requests the States concerned to give the necessary attention to finding solutions to problems caused by extreme poverty and exclusion from society.

Vulnerable groups targeted by the two resolutions

2. Vulnerable groups may be taken to comprise all socially disadvantaged sectors of the population, namely orphans, the disabled, abandoned children, the indigent, etc.

Action by the Government of Burundi

3. Many measures have been taken by the Government, for example:

(a) in the international sphere, the Government of Burundi has ratified a number of human rights conventions thus demonstrating its awareness of the problem and the efforts it is making to combat the abuses that have repercussions on human rights:

(i) The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

(ii) The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ratified in 1990;

(iii) The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, ratified in 1989;

(iv) The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, ratified in 1991;

(v) The International Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified in 1990.

(b) In the national sphere, Burundi has a Ministry of Social Welfare and the Promotion of Women. The Ministry's activities in the social welfare field are varied and include the staffing and establishment of centres for the disabled or the deserted. Examples are the National Centre for Social and Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons, SOS children's villages and kindergartens (Projet Enfant Soleil). There are also privately-run reception centres and charitable organizations that take in children (at Kiremba, Kanyinya, Bujumbura and Mugera). Even though these are privately run, they

receive financial support from the Government in the form of subsidies. Children who are unable to be placed in these centres are given food aid in the form of milk.

4. Rehabilitation and social reintegration is the subject of a joint project by the Ministry and privately-run organizations at Mubone (Mutimbuzi commune). Thirteen elderly people, eight of them women, are sheltered, fed, cared for when ill and clothed.

5. In another rehabilitation and social reintegration project, disabled persons have been settled at Mubone, Gihanga and East-Mpanda. However, more disabled persons with motor defects than with censory defects (the blind and deaf) have benefited from these projects.

6. There is also another group of persons existing who are in good health but lack the minimum necessary means of existence. The action on their behalf comprises:

- issuance of a certificate of indigence which allows them access without charge to certain services;

- provision of school supplies for their children.

7. However, available resources are insufficient and the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Promotion of Women is unable to meet all the needs of these vulnerable groups. Fortunately, a number of charitable individuals and organizations (such as the diocesan development centres and the missionary sisters of charity) are assisting the Government in setting up reception centres for them.